

4. CHŪHĀ SHĀH DAULA.

In the Panjāb certain dwarfs are seen called "Chūhā Shāh Daula," Rats of the shrine of Shāh Daula, a Muhammadan Saint.

In 1851 I saw two of these dwarfs exhibited at Paris, riding on ostriches, and described as a peculiar race of pigmies. I asked our new member, Muhammad Latif, to send an account of them for our Journal, with the following result.

ROBERT N. CUST,
Hon. Sec. of R.A.S.

63, *Elm Park Gardens, S.W.*
May 20, 1896.

Jallandhar City, Panjāb,
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SIR,—I have made inquiries regarding the people known in the Panjāb as "Chūhā Shāh Daula" found in Gujrat District and elsewhere in the Panjāb. The hereditary custodians of the shrine of Shāh Daula, in the city of Gujrat, maintain, that parents not endowed with a child make a vow at the Chawngāl, or mausoleum of the Saint, that, should they be gifted with a child, male or female, they would make an offer of him or her at the shrine of the Saint. Through the blessings of the Saint a child is born to the parents, and in fulfilment of the vow they offer the child at the shrine. The child's head is invariably small, and so the epithet *Chūhā* or "Mouse" is given to it. The story, however, is wrong. In the first place, why should parents ask the gift of a child whose head is so small that the child, when grown up to manhood, becomes an idiot and is devoid of all senses? A child so born is quite useless to the parents and to the world at large. Secondly, the story as to the blessings of the Saint is absurd, since the gift of a child in such condition is rather a curse to the parents than a blessing.

The truth of the matter is, that *Chūhā*—males or females—born with small heads, are extraordinary creatures, and

the fashion has grown in the Panjāb of making an offer of a child so born at the shrine of Shāh Daula in Gujrat, and the child is called "*Chūhā* Shāh Daula." I made inquiries about the matter from old and well-informed people, and they all agree, that there is nothing supernatural in the birth and constitution of the sect in question, and that they are merely extraordinary creatures.

At a time, it was gravely suspected by the authorities, that the hereditary custodians of the shrine of Shāh Daula in Gujrat, who keep a number of these extraordinary creatures at the shrine (who prove to them a source of gain), employ artificial means of making the heads of newborn children small, and prevent the natural growth of the head by squeezing it in an iron vessel, and keeping it in such condition for a length of time until its further growth has ceased. But at length careful inquiries into the causes of the smallness of the head showed, that it was due neither to supernatural powers, nor to artificial agencies, but that the people were merely extraordinary creatures.

The saint Shāh Daula was born in 975 A.H. (1567 A.D.), and died at the age of 150 in 1125 (1713 A.D.), or in the time of the Emperor Jahandār Shāh. He was a descendant of the Behlol kings, and on the mother's side was related to Sultan Sārang Khan, *Ghakkar* chief. He was an eyewitness of the events of the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, Shāhjahan, and Aurangzeb, the four celebrated Moghul emperors.—Yours obediently,

MAHOMED LATIF.

5. ROSARIES IN CEYLONese BUDDHISM.

I have found no references in European literature to the rosaries of the Buddhists of Ceylon; and several writers on the Buddhism of that island, whom I addressed on this subject, gave it as their opinion that rosaries are unknown to Ceylonese Buddhists.

Having devoted some attention to Buddhist ritual, and